

**Report on Capital Campaign Financial Feasibility Study
for the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Palouse**

I. Executive Summary

The Unitarian Universalist Church of the Palouse in Moscow, Idaho (UUCP) engaged Rachel Maxwell of Stewardship for Us to conduct a financial feasibility study and to determine the readiness of the congregation to conduct a successful capital campaign. The focus of the campaign is to renovate and expand the UUCP facilities to accommodate more children, more people in the sanctuary, and the wider community. The campaign includes plans to upgrade accessibility throughout the building. UUCP hopes to launch a campaign this year to create a large and welcoming facility overall.

This study estimates how much money is likely to be raised in a capital campaign to fund the building expansion and renovation and it summarizes other important feedback about the congregation from its members.

The study results are based on data collected during one-on-one confidential interviews with 40 individuals from 26 households and information entered directly into an online survey from 7 additional individuals for a total of 47 individuals representing 33 households.

Information was obtained from 26% of the 125 households who pledged for the 2019 year. The households in the study also represent 60% of the \$249,404 in annual pledges.

The results of the financial feasibility study are very positive and show:

- UUCP should be able to raise approximately \$1.5M to \$1.9M.
- A stretch campaign goal would be \$2.3M.
- Participants indicated contributions totaling \$1,172,749.
- There is indicated willingness and capacity for additional giving from 25 of the 33 households that participated in the study. They indicated a variety of reasons they might give more: being inspired knowing others were making gifts, if the congregation was close to its goal, or in an additional or second ask.
- This projection assumes a three-year capital campaign beginning in 2019 and also assumes it will be possible for donors to make gifts during four calendar years: 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022.
- 100% of the households who completed the survey or participated in the confidential interviews indicated they would make a gift.

II. Background and Methodology

A. Background

UUCP is an ambitious congregation with a large, strong and committed group of lay leaders and a beloved settled minister who just completed a six-month sabbatical. Study participants were highly complimentary about the hard work of the building and finance teams that have worked on congregational input, development and design of the project. The congregation has done detailed, thoughtful and important work in planning—taking good care to be sure each voice is heard and considered in the process.

B. Methodology

The financial feasibility study included confidential interviews of a sample of congregants representing 26% of pledging households in order to extrapolate capital gifts for the entire congregation. In the 2019 annual giving drive 125 households were recorded as providing financial support.

Thirty-three households totaling 47 individuals were represented in the study. The interviews were conducted on site, in person from September 13 through 15, with one interview conducted at a different location and one conducted via zoom in the week following the site visit. A large portion of the lead contributors to the annual giving drive were included, as these households are often major contributors to a capital campaign. Beyond these households, the study included a sample of the entire congregation based on age, gender, annual financial contribution, length of time in the congregation, having children and/or youth in religious exploration, and involvement in different program areas. Overall, the households interviewed contributed 60% of the pledges for 2019.

A set of interview questions was developed and used for all interviews to ensure that a standard set of data was collected. When a couple was interviewed together, the views of each person were recorded separately. The interviews covered the following topics:

- Length of association with the congregation
- Listing of top programs, activities and strengths of the congregation
- Vision for the future of the congregation
- Familiarity with and priority of the proposed campaign
- Any compliments or concerns about the proposed campaign or the congregation
- Likely financial contribution to a capital campaign
- Willingness to help out with some aspect of a capital campaign
- Planned giving and interest in including the congregation in their estate plans.

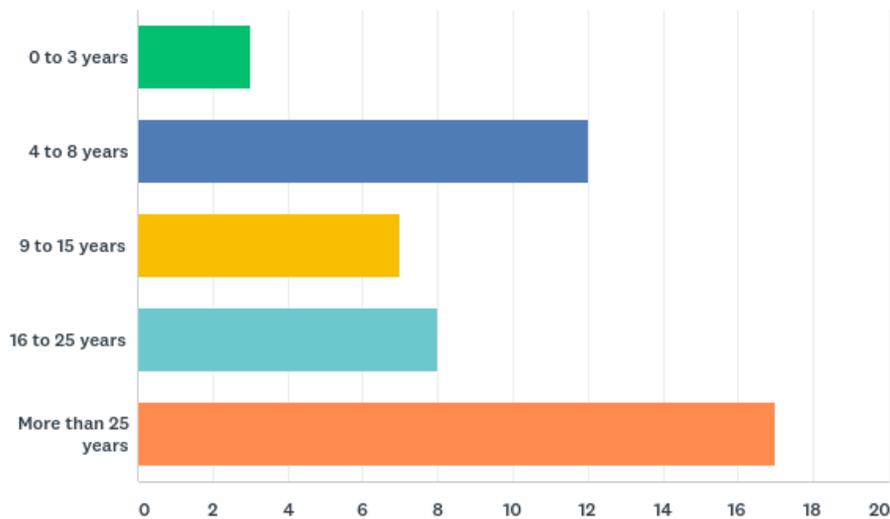
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Data from the interviews was analyzed taking into account the qualitative information to determine intellectual and emotional support for the capital campaign as well as the financial data to calculate the amount of money that may be raised in the campaign.

III. Findings

The survey questions were designed to identify the characteristics of the people interviewed, their connection to the congregation, their knowledge of and engagement around the proposed project, and their capacity and willingness to support it with their time, talent and treasure.

A. Length of Time with the Congregation



B. Inspiring Moments or Programs for Congregants

Participants gave a variety of answers when asked to describe a transformative or inspiring moment or program at UUCP. Below is a word cloud created from their responses.



C. Top Programs and Activities

People interviewed were asked to name the program or activity that is currently the most important to them other than Sunday services. The top three programs mentioned as Most Important to those interviewed are:

- Social Justice
- Children and Family programs
- Small Group ministry

D. Key Strengths of UUCP

When asked to identify one key strength of the congregation one person said, “We show up!” and another said, “We do things that matter.” Your community and the wonderful people at UUCP were mentioned time and again. Your action and dedication to social justice, your depth of leadership, your kindness and commitment to opening your circle to welcome-- all were mentioned multiple times.

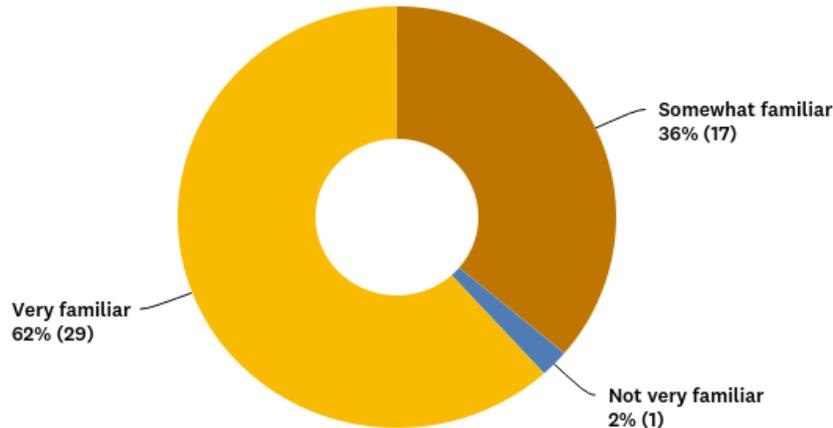
E. Vision for the Future of the Congregation

When asked about their vision for UUCP in five to ten years. Most said they wanted this building project to happen. They love what’s happening in the congregation now and want to see more of the same. They envision the new and old spaces supporting a wider presence in the greater community and a larger congregation. They see many new people coming through your doors and more children and families served by your liberal religious community. They see UUCP as a hub and a home for the liberal values lived in the Palouse community.

see_{us} church thought new_{greater} want_{young} grow open needs
 Better people_{services} community stronger space
 project facility_{building} center_{growth} will_{RE} Moscow_{place}
 congregation



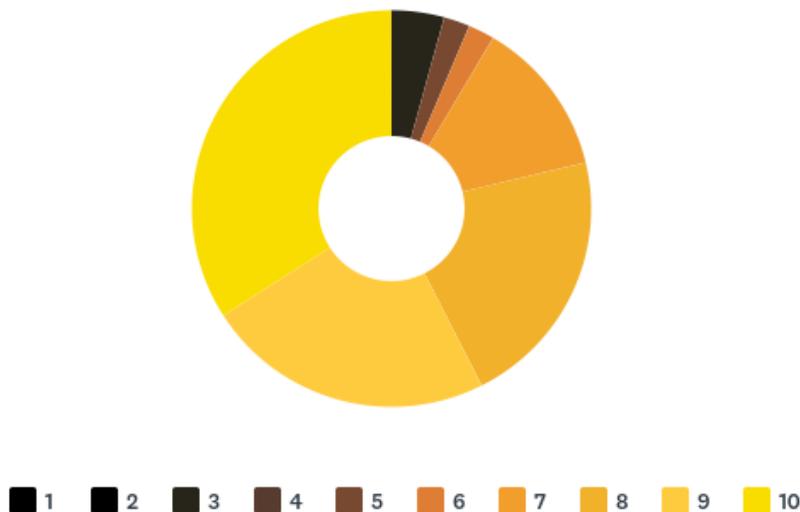
F. Familiarity with the Project



Almost all of the people interviewed were familiar with the project demonstrating a strong and well received effort in educating the congregation.

G. Ranking of Importance of the Proposed Campaign for the Congregation

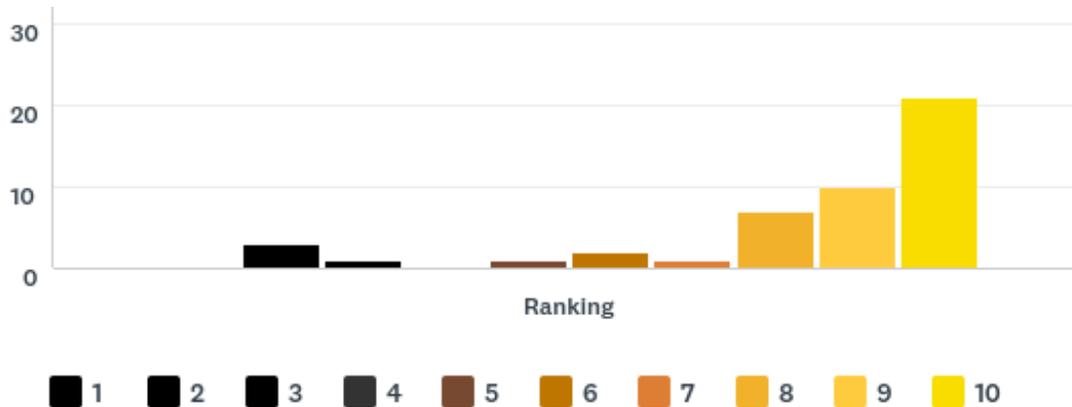
Study participants were asked to rank the importance of the building project to the future of UUCP with 1 meaning it's not important and 10 meaning it's very important. 37 participants ranked it at 8 or above. 3 ranked it at 5 or below. 90% of participants ranked the project with an importance of 7 or above.



Several people commented that the congregation will “still be okay if we can’t do this.” Indicating both concern about finances and trust in each other. Beautiful!

H. Does the Campaign Support Your 5-10 Year Vision for the Congregation?

When asked whether the campaign supports their personal vision for UUCP in 5 to 10 years, 46% of the participants gave the project the highest ranking of 10, another 22% of participants ranked it a 9, another 15% ranked it an 8. 90% of participants ranked it at 6 or above in support of their vision for the future of UUCP.



Comments on this question mentioned the opportunities for bringing in the larger community to UUCP and appreciation for keeping the beloved historic sanctuary and still making room for growth. Concern was expressed about enough parking for the people who have to travel a distance to church. And there was concern that the new spaces may not offer you *enough* room to grow.

I. Information received about the project.

100% of participants had engaged in one or more of the opportunities to obtain information about the project. Much appreciation was expressed about the way that the building team conducted meetings and how well they listened to various views and suggestions. Early circle meetings in the lead up to the vote on strategy were mentioned as well as the more recent meetings about the designs. 100% of participants give the ranking of the effectiveness of engaging the congregation a six or above. Only two would like more information.

J. Estimates of How Many at UUCP Would Give a Gift of \$10,000 or More to the Campaign

There are 125 households that currently fund UUCP's annual budget. With that prompt, participants were asked how many of those households would give a campaign gift of \$10,000 or more. Nine couldn't respond at all. The minimum number of households mentioned was 3 and the maximum was 75. The average guess was between 19 and 21 households and the median guess was 15 households. The sample gift chart I shared showed 43 households giving \$10,000 or above for a \$1.7M campaign.

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K. Likely Financial Contributions

Each household participating in the feasibility study was asked how much they expected to contribute to the campaign over a three-year period, in addition to their annual financial commitment to the congregation. During the in-person interviews, they were handed a sample gift chart for a \$1.7M campaign and were informed the campaign would likely permit gifts in four tax years beginning in 2019. Gift ranges as high as \$350,000 or more and working down to no commitment, were offered in the sample gift chart (see Appendix).

100% of households participating in the study indicated they intend to make a gift to the campaign. That is excellent. A total of \$1,172,749 in gifts were indicated by participants and 23 of 33 households indicated major gifts of \$10,000 or over.

The left four columns of the chart below made up the Sample Gift Chart shared with Participants in the study.

Gift Range	# of Gifts Needed	Totals	# of Gifts Indicated by Study Participants	Amount Indicated by Study Participants
\$350,000 or higher	1	\$350,000		
\$250,000 to \$349,999	1	\$250,000		
\$100,000 to \$249,999	2	\$200,000	4	\$550,000
\$50,000 to \$99,999	4	\$200,000	7	\$375,000
\$25,000 to \$49,999	7	\$175,000	4	\$110,000
\$15,000 to \$24,999	10	\$150,000	2	\$35,000
\$10,000 to \$14,999	18	\$180,000	6	\$62,000
\$5,000 to \$9,999	20	\$100,000	4	\$27,500
\$3,000 to \$4,999	23	\$69,000	4	\$12,000
Up to \$3,000	30	\$26,000	2	\$1249
No commitment	9	\$0		
TOTAL	125	\$1,700,000	33	\$1,172,749

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It is worthy of note that participants in the study were from all four quartiles of annual giving. All five households making up the top quartile were interviewed, seven of the nine households in the second quartile were interviewed. Eight of twenty households in the third quartile were interviewed and 13 of the 91 households in the fourth quartile participated in the study. Multiple major gifts were indicated in all four quartiles.

Projecting from the study sample to the entire congregation yields an estimated capital campaign pledge range of \$1.5M to \$1.9M. A stretch goal would be \$2.3M. A gifts table for your campaign that could be included in a campaign brochure will be crafted once you approve a campaign goal, as part of assistance with the capital campaign.

This estimate is based on the following assumption that the campaign will ask people to make contributions over a three-year period and provide four tax years for participation (including 2019).

Thirty-one of the 33 households participating in the study indicated they might consider a larger contribution as part of a second ask or if you are close to your goal. Twelve households indicated they may be inspired to give more knowing that others are giving.

L. Compliments

Participants were invited to share compliments about the proposed campaign or the congregation in general and asked if there were any particular people they wanted to acknowledge for their efforts. Their comments are in the chart below.

Compliments
I see how hard Marisa and Martha are working and appreciate that. I like the one-pager about the project! I am grateful for everyone who has stepped up.
I appreciated Chuck Harris' work early on with the survey.
The building team who came up with the plan did a beautiful job. I love our current building, and this is a wonderful plan. That could not have been easy. The plan is just the right mix of focusing on what's most needed and people felt heard. It was a graceful and respectful listening process.
Thank you to the Building Committee
They have done this in such an incredibly mindful way! In a way that I wouldn't have imagined this congregation would have been able to do 15 years ago. A lot of people have put in a huge amount of time - a wonderful thing. Impressive.
Very impressed and appreciate all the work of the two committees and the board and their good work they have done to communicate including the early work and meetings about the options.
The number of people involved is extensive they've worked hard and done a great job.
Thank you to everyone involved the planning and organizing meetings and presentations. Really good presentations and planning looks well thought out. All comments were clearly taken to heart.
The building committee, Al Poplawsky, Joel Hamilton, John Poole, Steve Flint, Mary Jo Hamilton, Bill Webb, (may have forgotten someone) The finance committee: Martha, Marisa, Sue, Judy Lalonde.

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Rev. Stevens has really inspired this congregation.
Ginger is top notch! The campaign finance and building committees have done a fabulous job of communicating clearly. Rev. Elizabeth is a good leader! There's a lot of people who put in so much time to make this place work. We appreciate them so much – the Hamiltons for sure!
Amazing, effective work by a large number of dedicated individuals, working effectively together.
I think it's been a very comprehensive and thoughtful process. Good job!
Al Poplawsky has done a wonderful job! Keeping the committee on task and getting information out and Pat Fuerst has been great about getting info out.
Hard work, done well by all committee members
The committee of the campaign. Members of the church, Marisa is really stepping up and evolving as a leader - she's fantastic! Al Poplawsky - so grateful for his work. Archie and all he's doing -- the whole committee has done a fantastic job! This has to be one of the most important committee commitments since we hired Rev Elizabeth.
I really like the way the momentum swept this congregation - everybody is on board.
It's amazing how people are stepping up to help out with this! Grateful to them. Grateful that this architect is helping with this. Rev. Elizabeth is incredible!
Mary Dupree, Archie, Martha, Marisa, Al, and Joe and Bill Webb
Appreciate the time and effort of the folks who have created this - Archie George and Rev. Elizabeth. Leaders who keep things at the forefront.
Appreciate Marisa's commitment.
This is something we all share, not tied to one person. The board keeps getting stronger. I appreciate the sense on the board that people are interested in being part of the leadership. Folks are growing into leadership -- the circle has widened. No longer held in the hands of just a few.
Al has done a wonderful job in working through the building plans and process. It's an elegant design! Appreciate that this has been a congregational effort. Rev. Elizabeth has been supportive but not over-involved.
All the people on the building and capital campaign committee. People putting in extra time, Mary Dupree and Marisa.
Dozens of people have come together to work hard on this project and I appreciate all their efforts - Board, CC Finance Committee and CC Building Committee.
The whole committee that's been working on this should be thanked! I love the design and the vision -- there's room for growth even in the sanctuary. I love how forward thinking this design is. Being truly welcoming to the community.
The initial discernment committee was diligent and thoughtful -- Thank you to Dave Nelson, Mary Dupree, Al Poplawsky, Chuck Harris and all the others.
Seems like a great plan!
Ginger is Wonderful! I'm grateful for all she does. Thank you to Rachel for helping us. The plan of the building fits the historic value of this church - I appreciate that! Thank you to the folks designing a warm community-oriented building. The original organizing committee did a superb job getting this off the ground.
Pleasantly impressed with the folks leading the project - the people running meetings. So wonderful -- great work. It must have taken a lot to come up with this plan! Thank you for making this into something so deeply important and presented so clearly! With such openness. Truly heartening! This design maintains the character of the church.

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Joe Pallen has done so much to keep things moving. Al Poplawsky has done an great job answering difficult questions. Thank you Marisa Gibler and Alice Woodrum. Archie George. Judy Lalonde. Bill Webb. And Rachel.
Everybody who has been working on this! So many people are contributing so much! The way the architects were able to integrate the new addition is amazing.
I appreciate that the team has been dedicated to hearing everybody's voice throughout the process.

M. Concerns

The following table lists the comments of study participants when asked whether they had any concerns about the proposed campaign or the congregation in general.

Concerns
I'm concerned there are no plans to have central AC in the sanctuary.
I feel that we overreached by adding the third floor and elevator to the plan. We are on a limited size property and existing building and needed to plan accordingly but we got into everyone's wish list and kept adding. I think we need to bring it down into reality.
I would like to see more joy and fun infused into how we approach what we do here.
The Moscow-centric attitude can be hard for folks living in Pullman and other places. The language being used is better now than it used to be. There's more sensitivity now than there used to be. The parking matters a lot to the folks who don't live in Moscow!
I'm worried we won't make it. I have concern about where RE will be during the building process.
Strategically, I am concerned that we keep the momentum going. I'm hoping we've heard from the right people. Need to figure out how to reach all the different demographics who will be affected by the building at this point in the process - we have plans and they are to an extent modifiable.
Biggest concern is length of the Sunday service -- too much packed in to it. I've seen newcomers walk out because of the length.
I'm concerned about over-reaching our capacity for financing this, but also confident that we can scale back effectively if necessary.
I'm just worried about our dependence on Rev. Elizabeth for our growth.
I'm just concerned that the congregation as a whole doesn't have enough money - and I hope I'm wrong!
My concern is what happens after the capital campaign. How do we finance the bridge loan etc... If we have to have a loan, how do we fit that into our annual budget.
This building is too limited in vision—there's not enough room in the plan for significant growth!
I hope we rethink what it means to share our space for free. We have value! Don't discount that.
Concerns that folks with less money have the opportunity to be involved and can be confident and happy in their participation and contributions. I hope others can share that we will be fine even if we can't build this.
I wish folks weren't worried about the little stuff so much.
Once this is underway -- what do we do what we do? How long is it going to take?
Would like to see two congregations. Worried that this isn't visionary enough in providing a home for many more people. There is a reluctance to see ourselves bigger. We're not serving Pullman the way we should.

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In our haste to get the ball rolling we might be forgetting process on the name of the project.
Worried about during the construction-- how we do church? and the kids have classes?
The parking issue. Adding more seats - we're pushed for parking. And counting on the city to give us a variance is worrisome. The solar panels seem like more of a feel good gesture rather than a practicality. Worried about return on investment for solar - in greenness not just money. Maybe more insulation is a better idea energy-wise.
I've liked everything - we may have to make compromises and reductions if we don't make the whole amount. Where we economize is not going to be easy.
I'm worried about the feasibility of the project.

N. Other Information Gathered

Campaign Volunteer Support

Many study participants indicated a willingness to assist with the capital campaign when asked about different areas for which they could volunteer. A list of volunteers and the areas in which each person offered to help will be shared with the Capital Campaign Team.

Possible Gifts from Outside the Congregation

Interview participants offered up the names of people outside the congregation who might be willing and able to contribute to the capital campaign. The suggested names will be shared with the Capital Campaign Team.

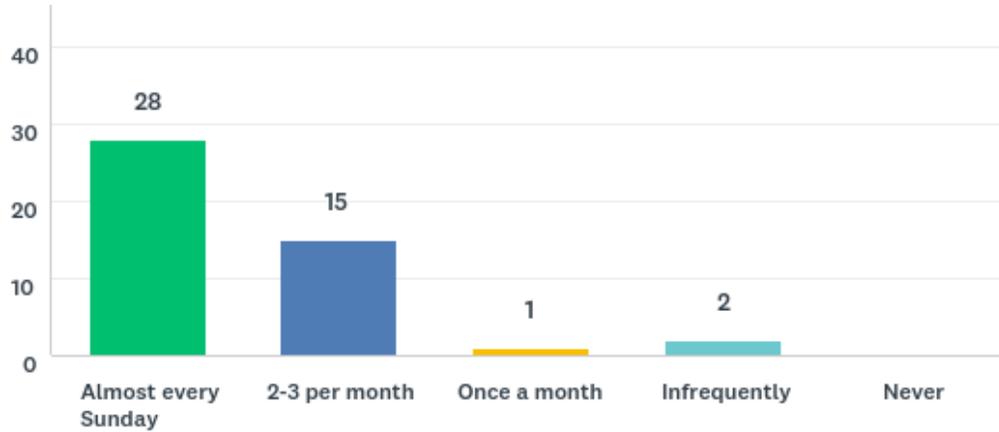
Planned Giving

Twenty-one people who participated in the study indicated they have a will. Seven indicated they are in the process of making a will. Eight indicated they have included the congregation in their wills. Ten said they would like more information on how to include the congregation in their estate planning and seventeen said they might attend a meeting about planned giving to UUCP.

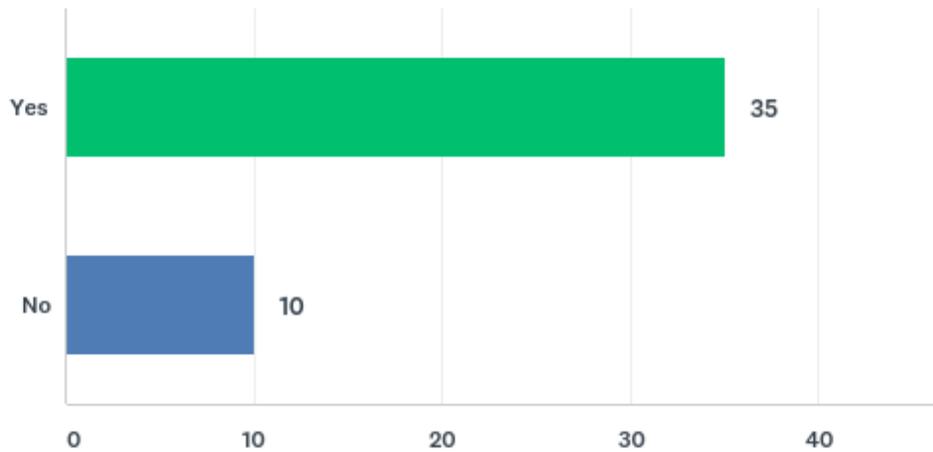
The names of people who would like more information or might attend a meeting will be shared with the appropriate leadership.

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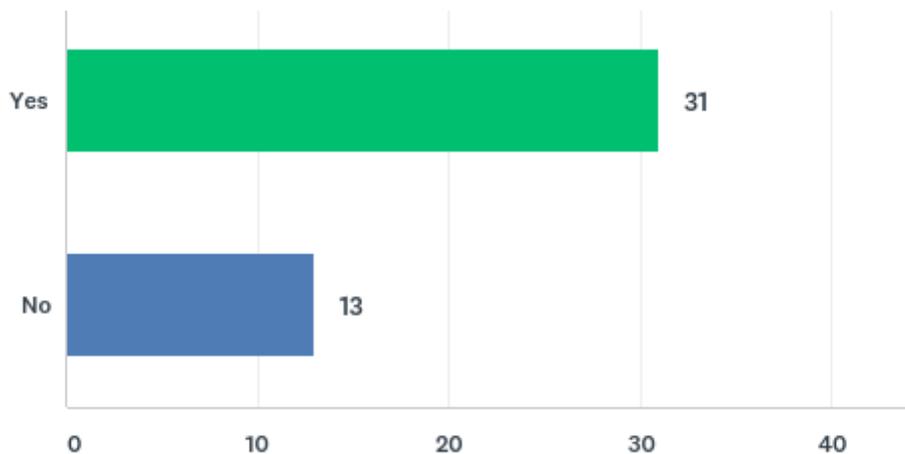
Attendance at Sunday Services



Current Service on Committee or the Board

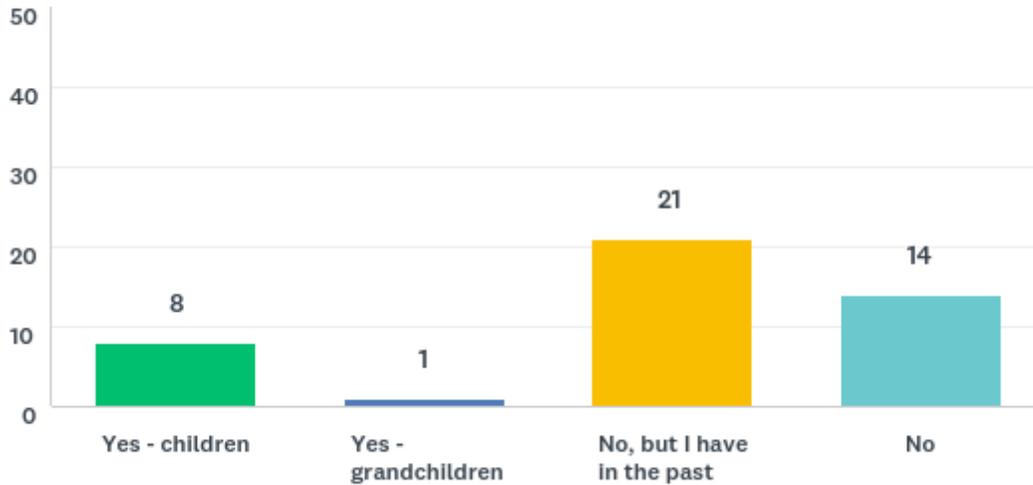


Past Service on Committee or the Board



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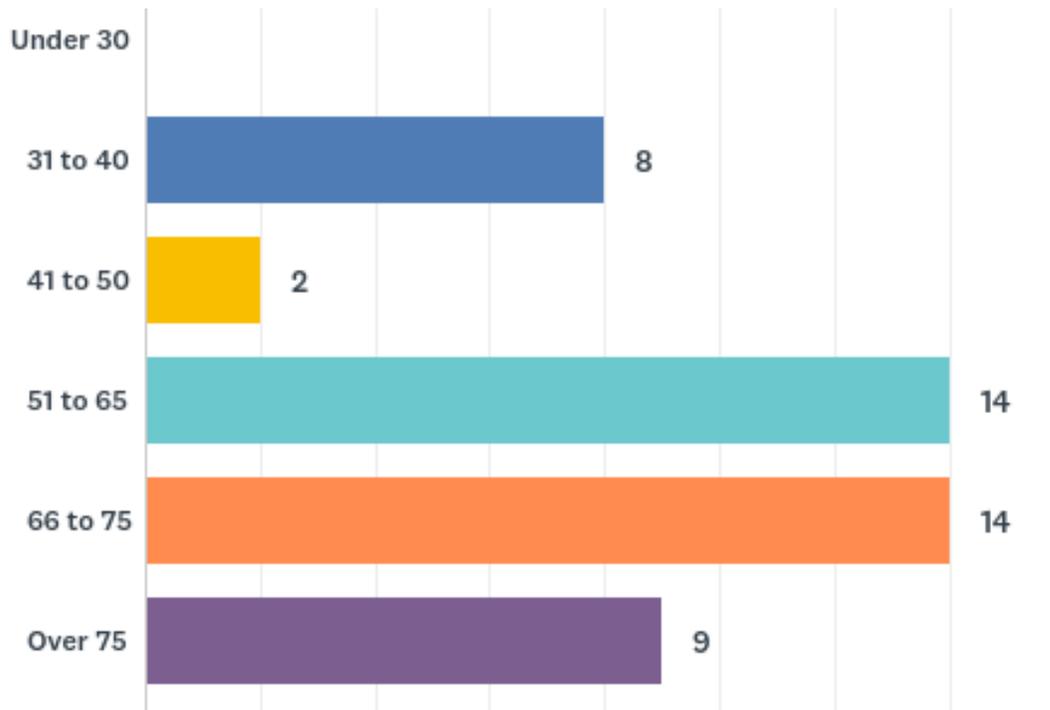
Participants were asked if they had children or grandchildren in the RE program



The Household Income of Participants



Age Range of Participants



IV. Recommendations

Based on the results of the study and analysis of the findings, I recommend that UUCP proceed with the capital campaign as planned. The study's findings show that, with a successful campaign effort, you should be able to raise the funds needed for the current plan.

Next steps:

- Present the results of the feasibility study to the congregation and provide an opportunity for discussion.
- Determine a campaign goal, title and case statement.
- Develop and stick to a task plan, timeline and organization for carrying out the campaign. There are recommendations provided in *Beyond Fundraising*, by Wayne Clark, and I can assist you if you choose as needed.

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- Ensure that congregants know that gifts of every size are welcome. Every member of the congregation should be invested in your beautiful project. If a financial contribution isn't possible, encourage people to participate through time and/or creativity.
- Develop lists of who to approach to ask for contributions and a plan for social media and newsletter requests.
- Ensure that your congregants know that they should not reduce their annual contribution in order to make a gift to the capital campaign. Continuing robust support of your programs will be essential for both the short and long-term health of the congregation.
- The Capital Campaign Committee should confirm the willingness of the study participants who agreed to be visiting stewards and ensure that each steward is assigned no more than four households to approach for a gift to the campaign. Additional visiting stewards can be recruited beyond those identified in the study.
- Plan and launch the leadership phase of your campaign. Conduct visits to those indicating major gifts and visit all households in your top two quartiles during this phase.
- Conduct the campaign based on face-to-face stewardship visits—this is an essential method for a successful capital campaign.
- Share your own stories and ideas for how to access the funds to contribute. Some of these will be part of the stewardship training.
- Note that Congress has made permanent the IRA tax provision that allows gifts from IRA's to charitable institutions to be excluded from taxable income if age 70.5 or older. People can gift their required minimum distributions directly to the congregation to avoid paying tax on that income and sometimes avoid being placed in a higher tax bracket due to those funds being excluded from income when they are gifted.
- For financial tracking of capital campaign pledges and income, it is recommended that there be two separate people tracking the incoming gifts as well as outgoing payments for building costs. This system is often accomplished by having a capital campaign treasurer or campaign finance chair who is separate from the church treasurer, followed by monthly or periodic verification by a bookkeeper. A separate account for capital funds is also recommended, rather than simply keeping a spreadsheet that separates annual and capital funds; it reduces the opportunity for conflict and donors will be confident that their capital gifts are being allocated according to their intentions.

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- Note that there may be slippage. Some people will not fulfill their pledges for one reason or another. We usually see 5 to 10% in slippage.
- Be sure to invite participation from new members and others into the campaign over the full three-year period. Keep asking!
- Possible Chalice Lighter Grant from Pacific Northwest District
 - A Chalice Lighter Grant might be obtained at some point during or at the conclusion of your campaign, depending on a variety of factors including your fair share status with the UUA, the percentage of UUCP members who are active Chalice Lighters, when you received any previous grant and whether the substance of your request fits within their guidelines. See: <https://pnwduua.org/programs-resources/chalice-lighters/>.

VI. Closing

You are a remarkable congregation filled with love and committed people. You care for each other and the world – congratulations on all you have done toward creating beloved community! You are building a better world. I am confident that you can be successful with this campaign and build the beautiful facility you envision to welcome all those in your community who seek a progressive liberal religious home.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Love,



Rachel Maxwell
[Stewardship for Us](#)
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